A Brief History of Sikh Shrines in Sultanpur Lodhi

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Sultanpur Lodhi (Kapurthala)

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Town Sultanpur Lodhi

The town Sultanpur Lodhi's relation with the Sikhism begins from the end of 15th century. After Sri Nankana Sahib and Sri Kartarpur Sahib (Pakistan), it is the only town which is deeply and longley concerned with the life of Sri Guru Nanak Sahib Ji. Guru ji spent more than 14 years of his life in Sultanpur Lodhi. Before knowing the relation of this town with Guru ji, it is must to know about the history of this town.

Sultanpur Lodhi is one of the ancient cites of India. It witnesses the proud past of more than 20 centuries. The city of Sultanpur Lodhi estimated to be established in around 1st century. This city in the period of centuries witnesses the up and downs in term of politics, religion, literature, trade and commerce.

Sultanpur Lodhi from 1st century to 6th century was one of the major centers of meditation and knowledge for Buddhism. In that period, the city of Sultanpur Lodhi was known by the name of 'Sarwmanpur'. It is also believed that the ancient Buddhist book of 'abinav-prastava' authored by Katiyana was written in Sultanpur Lodhi. In 8th century, this place was established as a great empire of Hinduism and Buddhism.

When the Islamic invader Mehmood Gaznavi invades this area, as being a Hindu -Buddhist city, this city was burnt to ashes by his army. The city of Sarwmanpur after that was

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nothing but a bunch of peoples living in destroyed city. This was the end of ancient city of Sarwmanpur.

Sultan Khan, the son of Punjab's governer Wali Muhammad Khan was passing through the way and he was attracted by the beauty of the surroundings of the city. He decided to re-establish this city by his name. This was the complete death of Sarwmanpur and the birth of new city of Sultanpur Lodhi.

This new city of Sultanpur Lodhi was also the center point of the old trade route between Delhi and Lahore. It was one of the major trade centers of north India at that time. It consisted of 32 to major markets and about 5600 shops. At that time the city was spread over in an area of 8 miles (13 kms).

Sultanpur Lodhi, in those days was not only famous for its surrounding or trade, but also for its higher Islamic education. Many of the Islamic schools of education known as Madarasas were in this city. The two princes of Delhi, Aurangzeb and Dara-sekoh completed their studies in one of the famous white mosque of Sultanpur Lodhi.

The political importance of this town was established till the last of Mughal Empire. This town was one of the famous town of Jalandhar Bist Doab in the time of great Sikh soldier Baba Banda Singh Bahadur. Nawab Adena Begh got fame in this city also. In the 18th century the Sikh chiefs established their independence states.

After the fall of Mughals, the Sikh chiefs established their hegemony over various parts of Punjab. Sardar Jassa Singh Ahluwalia founded the principality of Kapurthala and made Kapurthala as his capital. Sardar Fateh Singh to annex this historic town of Sultanpur to the state of Kapurthala in 1777 A.D., it is now a division of Kapurthala. It is an important railway station on the Jalandhar, Ferozepore Rail line and its environments hold of a good tourist spot.

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Sri Guru Nanak Sahib and Sultanpur Lodhi:

Guru Nanak's sister called Nanaki was married to Jai Ram, an official of the chief, Daulat Khan Lodhi of Sultanpur. Guru Sahib's parents noticed that Guru ji had no interest in worldly affairs. Then they requested to Bhai Jai Ram to find out a job for the Guru Sahib in the court of Nawab Daulat Khan Lodhi. Guru Nanak Sahib visited this place in 1484 A.D., on the invitation of his brother-in-law and on arrival he was introduced to the chief (Modi), who was impressed by his personality and offered him the Post of Manager of stores. The Guru was in the prime of his youth then. He worked very hard in the state stores and distributed the major part of his earning among the needy. Soon he became very popular with common people of Sultanpur Lodhi. After some time in 1487, he was married with Bibi Sulakhni at Batala. Guru ji brought Bibi Sulakhni here and had two sons born to Guru ji 1494 A.D. to 1497 A.D. The Guru spent about 14 years of his life at Sultanpur *Janamsakhis* provide a vivid account about Guru Nanak's daily routine at Sutanpur Lodhi. Baba used to goes to the stream *Bein* to bath , then spent a long time in the meditation and the dawn of the day, he took the charge of the store.

Guru Nanak's mind was always fixed on God even when he was busy with his duties. It was here in Sultanpur that he one day received the call of Lord and he decided to undertake journeys to various lands to preach true religion to mankind. Thus Sultanpur Lodhi is held in great sanctity by the Sikhs as the place where the divine call came to founder of Sikhism.

Sikh Shrines in Sultanpur Lodhi

Gurdwara Sri Ber Sahib:

During Guru Nanak's stay in Sultanpur he used to go to the *Bein* stream early morning and after taking bath he

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would sit in meditation for a long time and with the daybreak he would be at his seat in the state store house at the post of duty.

A *Berry* tree stands even now at the spot on the bank of the Bein where the Guru used to sit for absorption in God and a grand building has been erected as a monument at the place and named after the *Berry* tree as Gurdwara Ber Sahib.

It was at this place that the Guru vanished after leaving the clothes in the supervision of an attendant and had a trace for 72 hours much to the astonishment and amazement of the attendant and unnoticed by the people of Sultanpur. The *Janamsakhi* describes the event as under:-

"As the entered (the river) for a bath, the angles of the Supreme Lord (Parmeshwar) conducted him to the Divine Portal. The angels made submission: Nanak is in attendance." He had the vision of the Eternal Portal. The Lord's grace fell on him. The attendant on the bank of the stream was all this while looking after the Guru's clothes, and waited and waited till he was tired, of it. He surmised at (Guru) Nanak must have been drowned in the stream. So he informed the Khan of this happening: Khan all the health Guru Nanak entered the stream and has not since once come up, then the Khan rode to the river. Divers where called, and nets were thrown into the river. The drivers made all effort till they were exhausted but could not trace him. At this the Khan was in deep distress, and rode back, saying, 'Nanak was a very honest officer.'

At the Divine Command the devotee Nanak was by Divine pleasure offered to him. The voice came: Nanak this is Amrita [Nectar] the cup of Name. Drink this, it is offered to thee." At this Guru Nanak made obeisance and quaffed the Cup of AMRITA. The Lord's grace fell on him, 'Nanak, I am ever by the side. I have showered my blessing on thee. Whoever calls on thee, shall also receive my blessing. Go thou into the world and mediate on the Name, and make

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mankind also meditate on the Name. Be thou ever unpollute by the lure of the world Engage thyself in meditation on th Name, in charity, in self-purification/ service and i remembering thy Lord, I have conferred on thee the blessin of my name. Make the Name alone the occupation.'

Guru Nanak at this made obeisance, and stood in th Presence. The Lord then said, 'Nanak, utter thou the greatnes of my Name.' Then spoke the Guru to the accompanimen of the Divine Minstrelsy.

Even thus the greatness would still elude my mind wha measure might I give to Thy Name? Eternal, Formless immutable the Lord!...

The voice once again: Nanak, the eyes have beheld as I ordain all creation. Praise thou my ordinance: what it is and what thou hast beheld at my portal. Then burst forth a harmony from the heavenly concert; the Guru spoke and his words echoed forth thus:

'Eternal the Lord; He ever was and ever shall be; Nothing is but the Lord; Nothing ever shalt last but.

Once again came forth the Divine Word; Nanak, my grace shall fall on whoever is graced by thee: my mercy shall fall on any to whom thou showest mercy. Know that my name is Par-Braham Parmeshwar, and thine is the Lord Guru.'

There after the Guru appeared in a grave-yard on the bank of the rivulet where now stands Gurdwara Sant Ghat. The Guru did not speak for a day and a night the next day he said in a loud voice,

'There is no Hindu and no Musalmans.'

The huge place Manji Sahib is situated nearby the Gurdwara Ber Sahib. The thousands of devotees visited on the birth occasion of Guru Nanak Sahib.

Bhora Sahib:

This place is situated under the Gurdwara Sri Ber Sahib. Here Guru Sahib used to sit in absorption. A Damdama is

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situated over there as a sign of meditation place, where Guru ji used to sit. The thousands of the devotees of the Guru visited on every Amavas on this place.

Gurdwara Sri Sant Ghat:

After 72 hours of disappearance in stream *Bein*, Guru Sahib ji was seated 3 miles away from the Gurdwara Sri Ber Sahib. Gurdwara Sri Sant Ghat is situated over there. On this place Guru Ji speak the *Mool Mantra*. During Maharaja Ranjit Singh's regime the management of the Gurdwara vested in Udasi Mohants. Sant Sadhu Singh Nirmla, Jatehdar Sant Singh Lasuri and Sant Udham Singh have done commendable work to reconstruct the new buildings at the site of the old building which was washed away by floods.

Gurdwara Sri Hatt Sahib:

The place where the Guru had been working as a Modi, has been named as Gurdwara Sri Hatt Sahib. This Gurdwara is situated on the back south side of old fortress. It is said that here the Guru had been distributing provisions to the saint, darvesh, qalander and the needy and uttering, "Tera, Tera" i.e. I am Thine.

When Guru Sahib's glory spread all over the town, the Nawab's spies reported to him of the "confused" state of affairs in the commissariat and of the grossly "Negligent" attitude of Guru Nanak's good conduct ordered a through check to the made of accounts of commissariat, only from the Guru but also from Jai Ram, his surety. The penalties for defaulters in State payments in those times were severing involving torture, mutilation and even death.

When, however, the stores were checked it was founded not only that there was no default of any kind, but there actually was some excess. The Guru's management was consequently commended by the Khan, who offered him a

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certain amount as reward for his honest and faithful service. The Guru refused to take the preferred amount and suggested to the Khan to distribute it among the poor.

There are fourteen weights preserved in a room here. These have been used by the Guru ji for weighing the provision. Know there is built a beautiful building of Gurdwara.

Gurdwara Sri Kothri Sahib:

After complaints of 'misappropriation' of stores, the Guru was called to the house of the Accountant General Jadu Rai to rander the accounts. After through checking it was found that the state will pay money to Guru Nanak. Guru ji refused to get the payment and asked the official of the Khan to distribute the same to the needy and himself resigned his post.

The place where the accounts were rendered has been named as Gurdwara Sri Kothri Sahib.

Gurdwara Sri Guru Ka Bagh:

The building used by Guru Nanak as his residence after his marriage has been turned into a Gurdwara and has been named as Gurdwara Sri Guru Ka Bagh. It was here that Guru's two sons Baba Sri Chand and Baba Lakhmi Das were born and Guru Sahib's family prospered here. Now there is situated a beautiful building of Gurdwara then before it was a small house.

Gurdwara Sri Sehra Sahib:

It is that sacred place, where Guru Arjan Sahib, stayed for a night while going to village Dalla during the marriage ceremony of his son Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji. The Sehra Bandi is said to have been performed at the place. Therefore the name of the place is Shera Sahib. It is also said that Guru Nanak had established his first seat of mission (Dharmsal) at this site.

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;urdwara Sri Antaryatma:

It is the place where in the *Idgah*, Guru Nanak Sahib ealized to Nawab Daulat Khan and his Maulvi the true neaning of Namaz. Now there has been established a eautiful Gurdwara.

In spite of these historical Gurdwaras, some other istorical Gurdwaras are situated also in the town Sultanpur odhi. As Gurdwara Baoli Sahib is situated in the village)alla. The Gurdwara Sri Rabab Sar in the village Bhoro-ana, vhereas Bhai Mardana got the Rabab with the order of Guru Janak. Gurdwara Sri Damdama Sahib is the near the village 'hata. All these Gurdwaras are under the managing of hiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Sri Amritsar.

3ibi Nanaki Gurmat College:

In the memory of Guru Nanak's elder sister Bibi Nanaki,)haram Parchar Committee of Shiromani Gurdwara 'arbandhak Committee has established a Bibi Nanaki Gurmat Missionary College, whereas giving teaching of reaching, music and vocal instrument to the Sikh students.

In the present time, this prominent town is the tehsil of listrict Kapurthala. Mostly the Hindus and the Sikh people ive in this town and practicing in different professions. It is :6 miles (42 Kms.) from Jalandhar and 17 miles (27 Kms.) rom Kapurthala. In the Mughal reign this town was situated on the Grand Trunk (Delhi- Lahore) road. Punjab government spent a big budget to expand the roads network of the city. On Guru Nanak's quince centenary, by the proposal of Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Sri Amritsar, Punjab Government did the best to improve he infrastructure of the town. Now Sultanpur Lodhi is a good tourist spot for the visitors. The sweets memories of he town are related with Guru Nanak Sahib. Therefore housands devotees visit to the town, pay their homage and get blessing of Guru Nanak Sahib.

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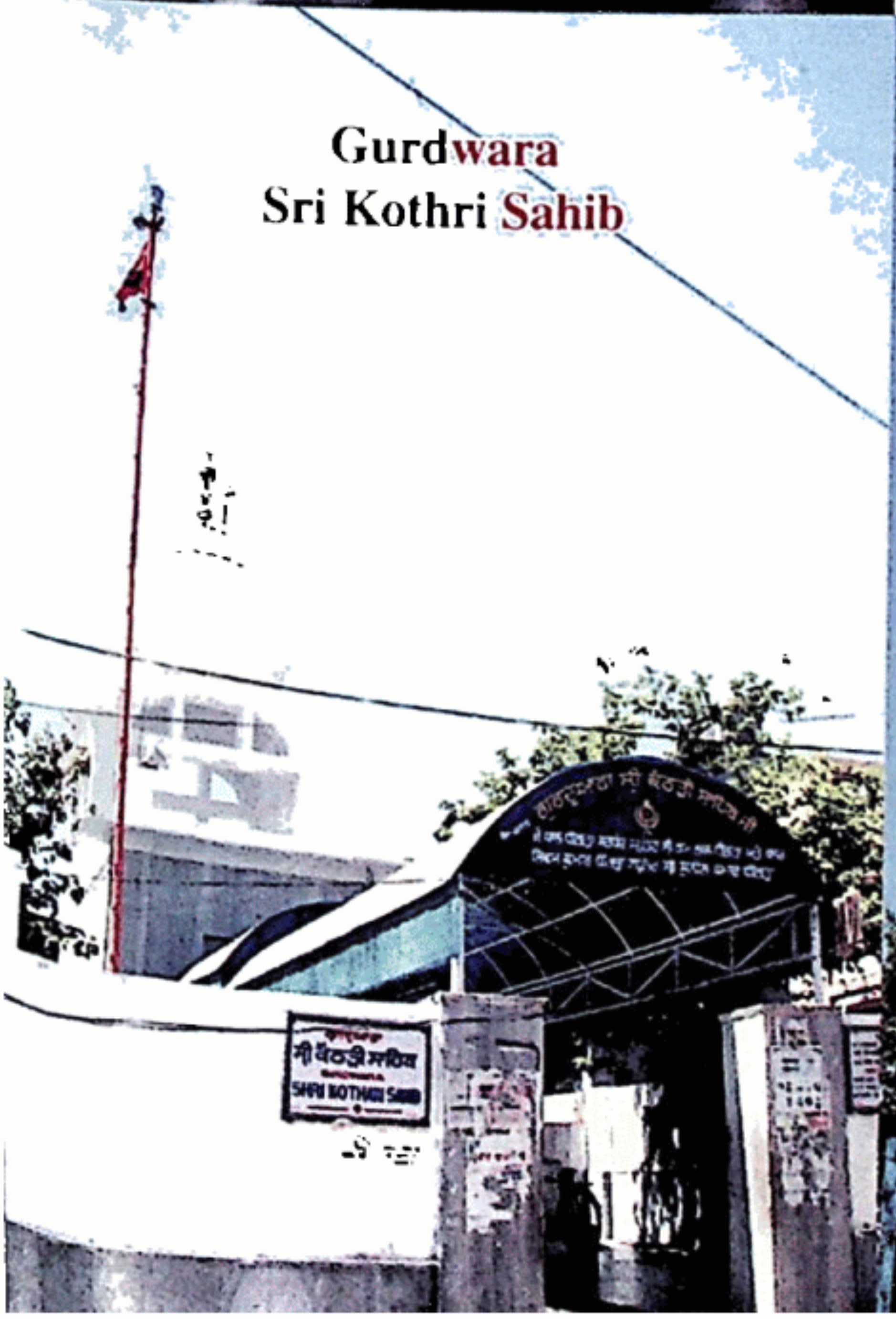
Gurdwara Sant Ghat

Gurdwara Sri Guru ka Bagh Sahi



Gurdwara Sri Kothri Sahib

Gurdwara Sri Anteryamta Sahib

Gurdwara Sri Hatt Sahib

Srai (Inn) Gurdwara Sri Ber Sahib